

Added

Mad, insane, or just stupid. An "addlepate" is a fool.

Aft	Short for "after." Toward the rear of the ship.
Ahoy	"Hello!"
ALL HANDS Ahoy!	The call by which all the ship's company are summoned upon deck.
Arrr!	This one is often confused with arrrgh, which is of course the sound you make when you sit on a belaying pin. "Arrr!" can mean, variously, "yes," "I agree," "I'm happy," "I'm enjoying this beer," and "That was a clever remark you or I just made." And those are just a few of the myriad possibilities of Arrr!
Avast!	Stop and give attention/"hold on a minute". It can be used in a sense of surprise, "Whoa! Get a load of that!" which today makes it more of a "Check it out" or "No way!" or "Get off!" Used to get someone's attention. Also used as a command to stop or desist; to demand attention (Avast Ye!). Dutch term for hold fast.
Aye	Yes. Why yes, I agree most heartily with everything you just said or did.
Aye aye!	I'll get right on that sir, as soon as my break is over
Ballyhoo of blazes	The last word of contempt for a slovenly ship
Beauty	The best possible pirate address for a woman. Always preceded by "me," as in, "c'mere, me beauty," or even, "me buxom beauty," to one particularly well endowed. You'll be surprised how effective this is.
Begad!	By god!
Belay	Stop that. "Belay that talk!" would mean "Shut up!"
Belaying pin	A short wooden rod to which a ship's rigging is secured. A common improvised weapon aboard a sailing ship, because they're everywhere, they're easily picked up, and they are the right size and weight to be used as clubs.
Bilge!	Nonsense, or foolish talk. The bilges of a ship are the lowest parts, inside the hull along the keel. They fill with stinking bilgewater -- or just "bilge."
Bilge rat	A bilge rat, then, is a rat that lives in the worst place on the ship.
Bilge-sucking	A very uncomplimentary adjective.
Black Spot	To "place the Black Spot" on another pirate is to sentence him to death, to warn him he is marked for death, or sometimes just to accuse him of a serious crime before other pirates.
Blaggard	"Blackguard." An insult.

Blimey!	An exclamation of surprise.
Blow-hard	Still used today; sailors used it chiefly to refer to an officer who blustered a lot but was ineffectual in a rough-and-tumble.
Booty	Treasure, loot
Bosun	Boatswain; a petty officer.
Bowsprit	The slanted spar at a ship's prow, the furthest front of the ship is the bowsprit. It is usually used as a lead connection for a smaller navigational sail.
Brazen-throated	Old adjective for a liar.
Brethren of the Coast	The Caribbean buccaneers called themselves by this name in the 1640-1680 period. During this time, they actually formed a sort of fraternity, and did not (usually) fight each other or even steal from each other. After 1680, a new generation of pirates appeared, who did not trust each other and with good reason. For game purposes we are entirely ignoring these dates.
Briny deep	The ocean. Probably no pirate in all history ever used this phrase, but don't let that stop you, especially if you can roll the R in "briny"!
Broadside	A general term for the vantage on another ship of absolute perpendicular to the direction it is going. To get along broadside a ship was to take it at a very vulnerable angle. This is of course, the largest dimension of a ship and is easiest to attack with larger arms. A "broadside" has come to indicate a hit with a cannon or similar attack right in the main part of the ship.
Buccanneer	A pirate who be answerin' to no man or blasted government. Buccaneers were said to be heavy drinking, cruel pyrates. Originally a term for those privateers who fought against the Spanish, later a general term for pyrates of the atlantic, specifically the Caribbean. The buccaneers were first hunters of pigs and cattle on the island of Hispanola, but were driven off by the Spanish and turned to piracy. The original boucaniers were the native inhabitants of the West Indies who had developed a method of preserving meat by roasting it on a barbecue and curing it with smoke. Their fire pit and grating were called a boucan and the finished strips of meat were also known as boucan. In time, the motley collection of international refugees, escaped slaves, transported criminals and indentured servants who roamed along the coasts if the islands became known as buccaneers and the term came to describe an unscrupulous adventurer of the area
Bucko	Familiar term. "Me bucko" = "my friend."
Bung hole	Victuals on a ship were stored in wooden casks. The stopper in the barrel is called the bung, and the hole is called the bung hole. That's all. It sounds a lot worse, doesn't it?

By God	Which hardly even raises an eyebrow now, was very offensive, as people back then were a little more leery of taking God's name in vain.
By the Powers!:	An exclamation, uttered by Long John Silver in Treasure Island!
CACKLE FRUIT Cap'n Careen	Chicken eggs. Short for "captain." To careen a ship is to take it into shallower waters or out of the water altogether and to remove barnacles and pests from the bottom. Pests include mollusks (worms), shells, and plant growth. Often a pyrate needed to careen his ship to restore it to proper speed. Also, careening was dangerous to pyrates as it left the ship inoperable while the work was being done.
Cat o'nine tails	Or just "cat" -- a whip with many lashes, used for flogging. "a taste of the cat" might refer to a full flogging, or just a single blow to "smarten up" a recalcitrant hand.
Chandler, or ship-chandler	See Sutler.
Chantey	A sailor's work song. Also spelled "shantey" or "shanty."
Chase	The ship being pursued. "The chase is making full sail, sir" = "The ship we're after is going as fast as she can."
Chest	Traditional treasure container.
Choke your luff	Command to be quiet
Come About	To bring the ship full way around in the wind. Used in general while sailing into the wind, but also used to indicate a swing back into the enemy in combat.
Corsair	A pirate who be makin' his berth in the Med-...Medi-...that sea 'tween Spain and Africa,
Corsair	A more romantic term for pirate. But still a pirate. This term was used for Christian and Muslim privateers in the Mediterranean between the 16th and 19th centuries. The Barbary corsairs centered on North African states and were often "hired" by Muslim nations to attack Christian ships. The Christian Corsairs were known as the Maltese corsairs and they took their orders from the Knights of St. John to attack the Turks
Crow's nest	A small platform, sometimes enclosed, near the top of a mast, where a lookout could have a better view when watching for sails or for land.
Cutlass	A curved sword, like a saber but heavier. Traditional pirate weapon. Has only one cutting edge; may or may not have a useful point.
Damn	An all purpose curse then as now, though it packed more punch back then. "damn your eyes," "damn your soul."

DANCE THE HEMPEN JIG	To hang, often the rope was hemp.
Davy Jones' Locker	The bottom o' the sea, where dead men's bodies are dispatched.
Davy's Grip	In Davy's grip or in Davy's hands = Dead dead deadski
Dead men tell no tales	Standard pirate excuse for leaving no survivors.
Dead man's chest	A coffin. Normally if you didn't drop into the drink when you ended up dead dead deadski then you might be put into a coffin, or sewn up in a shroud and then be dispatched, because of the superstitions about carrying dead bodies on ships.
Deadlights	Eyes. "Use yer deadlights, matey!"
Devil take you	Often the word "devil" was used where we today would say "hell." i.e. "go to the devil" was used more often than "go to hell," or "we had the very devil of a time getting here" instead of "we had a hell of a time getting here."
Doubloon	A Spanish gold coin. At different times, it was worth either 4, 8 or 16 silver pesos, or "pieces of eight."
DUGBIE	Rear end.
Fair winds!	Goodbye, good luck!.
Feed the fish	What you do when you are thrown into the sea, dead or alive.
Fiddlers Green	The private heaven where pirates be goin' when they die.
Flogging	Punishment by caning, or by whipping with the cat.
Fo'c's'le	This is a term used for the Forcastle or frontmost part of the ship. Usually under the front deck and above the lower deck.
Fore, or forrard	Toward the front end of the ship.
Furner	A ship which be yer own, not one ye steal an' plunder.
Gangway!	"Get out of my way!"
Gentlemen o' fortune	A slightly more positive term fer pirates!
Go on the account:	To embark on a piratical cruise
God's	[Fill in the blank]." among the more common: "god's blood," "god's teeth," and "god's wounds" (the last is where the exclamation "zounds" comes from).
Godspeed!	Goodbye, good luck!

Grog	An alcoholic drink, usually rum diluted with water, but in this context you could use it to refer to any alcoholic beverage other than beer, and we aren't prepared to be picky about that, either. Call your beer grog if you want. We won't stop you! Water aboard ship was stored for long periods in slimy wooden barrels, so you can see why rum was added to each sailor's water ration – to kill the rancid taste.
Grub	Food.
Gun	A cannon.
Gunwalls	The "sides" of the top deck. These "walls" were the only thing keeping things on deck from sliding into the water. Of course, these railings and walls had openings for the heavy arms or guns.
Hands	The crew of a ship; sailors.
Handsomely	Quickly. "Handsomely now, men!" = "Hurry up!"
HEAD	A marine toilet, which could be no more than a hole cut in the decking at the head or bow of a vessel that would allow waste to go into the sea. The waves, hopefully, washed away what may not have hit the water. (Also called Jordan.)
HEMPEN HALTERS	The hangman's noose.
Hornpipe	Both a single-reeded musical instrument sailors often had aboard ship, and a spirited dance that sailors do
HORNSWAGGLE	To cheat or defraud, often of money or belongings.
Jack Ketch	The hangman. To dance with Jack Ketch is to hang.
Jack Tar	Or tar -- A sailor.
Jack:	Flag or a sailor
Jolly Boat	A light boat carried at the stern of a larger sailing ship. This (probably) danish yawl (jol), proved better at high sea when a larger ship could hardly carry any sail.
Jolly Roger	The skull and crossbones, the 'standard' pirate flag, although pyrates had many different designs. It was an invitation to surrender, with the implication that those who surrendered would be treated well. A red flag indicated "no quarter."
Jury Mast	A temporary or make-shift mast erected on a sea vessel after the mainmast has been destroyed. Often, in combat, the mast was the most damaged (providing the ship didn't sink). Without the mast, a ship was powerless, so a term grew out of the need to make masts to power damaged ships.

Keelhaul	Punishment by dragging under the ship, from one side to the other. The victim of a keelhauling would be half-drowned, or worse, and lacerated by the barnacles that grew beneath the ship. It was a truly vicious punishment where a scurvy dog be tied to a rope and dragged along the barnacle-encrusted bottom of a ship. They most likely not be survivin' this.
Kiss the gunner's daughter	A punishment: to be bent over one of the ship's guns and flogged.
Lad, lass, lassie	A way to address someone younger than you.
LANDLUBBER	"Lubber" was an old English word for a big slow clumsy person, and this term was aimed at those persons on a ship who were not very skilled or at ease with ships life, as if to say "you were no better on land."
Lass:	A woman.
Letters of Marque	Papers issued by a national government during wartime, entitling a privately owned ship to raid enemy commerce, or even attack enemy warships. Early letters of reprisal were issued to merchants to make it legal for them to counter-raid pirates! A ship bearing such letters, and operating within their limits, is a privateer rather than a pirate . . . That is, a legal combatant rather than a criminal and murderer. The problem is that letters of marque aren't always honored, even by the government that issued them. Captain Kidd had letters of marque; his own country hanged him anyway.
Lights	Lungs. A pirate might threaten to "have someone's lights and liver."
Lily-livered:	Faint o' heart
Line	A rope in use as part of the ship's rigging, or as a towing line. When a rope is just coiled up on deck, not yet being used for anything, it's all right to call it a rope.
Loaded to the Gunwales (pron. gunnels):	Drunk
Long Boat	The largest boat carried by another ship. This was used to move larger loads, often anchors, chains, or ropes. In the case of pyrates, the longboats were used to transport the bulk of heavier treasures.
Long Clothes	Long clothes were a style of clothing best suited to land. A pyrate, or any sailor, didn't have the luxury of wearing anything loose that might get in the way while climbing up riggings. Landsmen, by contrast, could adorn themselves with baggy pants, coats, and stockings.
Lookout	Someone posted to keep watch on the horizon for other ships or signs of land.

Maroon	A fairly common punishment for violation of a pirate ship's articles, or offending her crew. The victim was left on a deserted coast (or, of course, an island) with little in the way of supplies. Usually these included a jug of water and a loaded gun. That way, no one could say that the unlucky pirate had actually been killed by his former brethren.
Matey	A piratical way to address someone in a cheerful, if not necessarily friendly, fashion.
Me	A piratical way to say "my."
Me hearties	Typical way for a pirate leader to address his crew. A friend or shipmate.
Mizzen	A term meaning "middle" on a ship. The mizzenmast was usually the largest and, perhaps, most important mast.
No quarter!	Surrender will not be accepted.
On the Account	The piratical life. A man who went "on the account" was turning pirate. A pleasant term used by pirates to describe the act of turning pirate. The basic idea was that a pirate was more "free lance" and thus was, more or less, going into business for himself.
Piece of eight	A Spanish silver coin worth one peso or 8 reales. It was sometimes literally cut into eight pieces, each worth one real.
Pillage	To raid, rob, and sack a target ashore.
Pirate	A seagoing robber and murderer. Contrast with privateer. A robber at sea. Any act of theft while on the oceans is piracy in the most general sense.
Poop Deck	The deck at the furthest back of a ship. Usually above the captain's quarters, the poopdeck was usually the highest deck of the ship.
Port	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A seaport. 2. The left side of the ship when you are facing toward her prow.
Powder Monkey	Powder monkeys were young boys, usually 11 to 13, who took extra supplies to gunners during times of battle. Pirates would often kidnap children for the dangerous job. This fact may have led Robert Louis Stevenson to develop his character of Jim Hawkins in the novel "Treasure Island."
Poxy	Literally meaning infected with syphilis. Diseased. Used as an insult, and in the exclamation "A pox on ye!"

Privateer	A ship bearing letters of marque (q.v.), or one of her crew, or her captain. Thus, she can only attack an enemy ship, and only in time of war, but does so as a representative of her country. A privateer is theoretically a law-abiding combatant, and entitled to be treated as an honorable prisoner if captured. A privateer is a sailor with a "letter of marque" (see below) from a government. This letter "allows" the sailor to plunder any ship of a given enemy nation. Technically a privateer was a self employed soldier paid only by what he plundered from an enemy. In this, a privateer was supposed to be above being tried for piracy. Tell that to Cap'n Kidd. Most often, privateers were a higher class of criminal, though many turned plain pirate before all was said and done.
Prow	The "nose" of the ship.
Quarter	Deriving from the idea of "shelter", quarter was given when mercy was offered by the pirates. To give no quarter was to indicate that none would be spared. Quarter was often the prize given to an honourable loser in a pirate fight. If enraged, however, a pirate would deprive the loser any such luxury.
Reef --	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. An underwater obstruction of rock or coral which can tear the bottom out of a ship. 2. To reef sails is to shorten them, tying them partially up, either to slow the ship or to keep a strong wind from putting too much strain on the masts.
Rope's end	Another term for flogging. "ye'll meet the rope's end for that, me bucko!"
Rum	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. (noun) -- Traditional pirate drink. 2. (adjective) -- Strange or odd. A "rum fellow" is a peculiar person, the sort who won't say "Arrrr!" on Talk Like A Pirate Day.
Sail ho!	"I see a ship!" The sail, of course, is the first part of a ship visible over the horizon.
Salt, old salt	An experienced seaman.
Savvy	Who knows whether your actual pirate said this, but Jack Sparrow says it a lot, and we think he's pretty cool. "Do you understand?"
Scallywag	A bad person. A scoundrel.
Scuppers	Openings along the edges of a ship's deck that allow water on deck to drain back to the sea rather than collecting in the bilges. "Scupper that!" is an expression of anger or derision: "Throw that overboard!"
Scurvy	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A deficiency disease which often afflicted sailors; it was caused by lack of vitamin C. 2. A derogatory adjective suitable for use in a loud voice, as in "Ye scurvy dogs!"
Scurvy dog! / Scurvy Cur	A fine insult!
Sea dog	An experienced seaman.

Sea Legs	After walking on a ship for long periods of time, sailors became accustomed to the rocking of the ship in the water. So, early in a voyage a sailor was said to be lacking his "sea legs" when the ship motion was still foreign to him. Often, after a cruise, a sailor would have trouble regaining his "land legs" and would swagger on land.
Shanty	Another spelling for "chantey" - a sea song.
Shark bait	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Your foes, who are about to feed the fish 2. A worthless or lazy sailor; a lubber who is no use aboard ship.
Shipshape	Well-organized, under control, finished.
Shiver me Timbers	This term was used to express shock or surprise. The idea of timbers shivering comes from the vibration set up in the mast (timbers) by either running aground or a solid hit from a larger gun. The suggestion is that something has shaken the speaker from a state of less awareness.
Sink me!	An expression of surprise.
Smartly	Do something quickly. "Smartly, me lass," you might say when sending the bar maid off for another round. She will be so impressed she might well spit in your beer.
Son of a Biscuit Eater	A derogatory term indicating a bastard son of a sailor
Son of a bitch	Term of abuse for a person
Son of a Gun	Someone born on board ship during a battle
Splice the mainbrace	To have a drink. Or, perhaps, several drinks.
Sprogs:	Raw, untrained recruits
Spyglass	A telescope.
Squadron	A group of ten or less warships
Squiffy:	A buffoon
Starboard	The right side of the ship when you are facing toward her prow.
Sutler	A merchant in port, selling the various things that a ship needed for supplies and repairs. Also called a chandler
Swab (noun)	A disrespectful term for a seaman. "Man that gun, ye cowardly swabs!"
Swab (verb)	To clean something. Being put to "swabbing the decks" would be a low-level punishment for a disobedient pirate.
Swag	Loot.

Swashbucklin'	Fightin' and carousin' on the high seas!
Sweet trade	The career of piracy
Swing the Lead	The Lead was a weight at the bottom of a line that gave sailors a way to measure depth when near land. To Swing the Lead was considered a simple job, and thusly came to represent one who is avoiding work or taking the easy work over the hard. In todays terms, one who swings the lead is a slacker.
Take a Caulk	On deck of a ship, between planks, was a thick caulk of black tar and rope to keep water from between decks. This term came to mean to "take a nap" either because sailors who slept on deck ended up with black lines across their backs or simply because sailors laying down on deck were as horizontal as the caulk of the deck itself.
talk bilge	Sailor's phrase for talking nonsense. A sailor could conceivably refer to nonsense talk as "flotsam," a term for junk found floating on the sea or washed up on shore
Thar:	The opposite of "here."
Walk the plank	A piratical execution. The victim, usually blindfolded or with bound hands or both, is forced to walk along a plank laid over the ship's side, to fall into the water below. Except this seems to be a total invention; it first appeared in 19th-century fiction, long after the great days of piracy.
Weigh anchor	To haul the anchor up; more generally, to leave port.
Wench	An individual of the female persuasion. "Saucy" is a good adjective to add to this, and if ye can get away with "Me proud beauty!," more power to ye.although ye gents not be wantin' to use this around a lady who be stronger than ye.
Wi' a wannion	Wi' a curse, or wi' a vengeance. Boldly, loudly!
Yardarm	The main arm across the mast which holds up the sail. The yardarm was another vulnerable target in combat, and it was also a favourite place from which to hang prisoners or enemies. Black Bart hung the Governor of Martinique from his yardarm.
Yellow Jack	Like any "jack" or flag, the yellow jack was used to indicate a particular disposition of a ship. In this case the yellow was to signify the yellow fever. A yellow flag flying meant that there was illness aboard. Often this was used to trick pyrates away from potential targets.
Yo-ho-ho -	A very piratical thing to say, whether it actually means anything or not.

All very nautical stuff

Abaft: point nearer the stern of a ship than another

About: to change tack

Acts of Pardon/Acts of Grace: a letter of marque for a "reformed" pirate, thus making him a privateer

Bachelor's Wife: a mistress

Barque: three-masted sailing vessel, square-rigged on mainmast and fore and aft rigged on mizzen

Barquentine: vessel resembling a barque, but square-rigged on foremast only

Bilged on her anchor: a ship pierced by her own anchor

Boom: a spar used to extend the foot of a sail

Bowline: rope made fast to the leech or side of a sail to pull it forward

Bowse: to haul with a tackle to produce extra rightness

Brail: to furl a sail by pulling it in towards the mast

Brig: originally an abbreviation of "brigantine," but later a two-masted, square-rigged vessel

Brigantine: a two-masted vessel, square-rigged on foremast and fore and aft rigged on mainmast

Bring to: check the movement of a ship by arranging the sails in such a way that they counteract each other and keep her stationary

Brought a spring upon her cable: a ship coming about in a different direction

Brulot: Montaigne word for a fireship (q.v.)

Buffer: chief bosun's mate who is in charge of discipline

Bumboat: a boat privately selling goods or provisions to sailors on ships in harbors

Cable: a large rope

Capstan: vertical rotating cylinder used for winding up anchor and other cable

Careen: to cause a vessel to keel over on its side to clean or repair its bottom

Chain shot: cannon balls fastened together with chain

Chase guns: cannon on the bow of a ship

Clap in irons: to be put manacles and chains

Clap of Thunder: powerful drink

Clap on: to add a temporary feature

Clipper: a fast sailing ship

Coaming: the raised edge around a hatch

Crack Jenny's Tea Cup: To spend the night in a house of ill repute

Crimp: a person who is tricked or press ganged (q.v.) into serving on a crew

Cutter: small, decked vessel with one mast

Davits: a small piece of timber used as a crane

Draft: the minimum water depth necessary to float a ship

Driver: large sail suspended from the mizzen gaff

Ensign: a flag.

Fathom: depth measurement of six feet

Fireship: a ship loaded with gunpowder and explosives, set on fire and sent to drift into enemy ports.

Fluke: broad part of an anchor

Frigate: three-masted, fully rigged ship heavily armed with 24 to 38 pound guns

Furl: to wrap or roll a sail close to the yard, stay or mast to which it belongs

Gaff: spar which holds upper edge of a four-sided fore and aft sail

Go on the account: to embark on a piratical cruise

Ground: the bottom of the sea

Halliards: rope or tackle for hoisting a spar holding a sail

Haul wind: to direct a ship's course as nearly as possible in the direction from which the wind is coming

Heave to: an order to stop

Heave down: to turn a vessel on its side for cleaning

Hogshead: a large cask used to transport beer or wine. The Hogshead was an archaic unit of measurement of approximately 100 gallons.

Holystone: a piece of sandstone used to scrub the decks

Jack o' Coins: the paymaster

Jack o' Cups: the first mate

Jack o' Staves: the first lieutenant

Jack o' Swords: the bosun

Job: triangular sail

Killick: the anchor

Lady of Expansive Sensibility: a Jenny

Lanyard: any rope that ties something off

League: three miles

Lee: side away from the wind

Let go and haul: order on tacking square-rigged ship given when the bow has just passed across the wind

List: lean to one side

Loaded to the Gunwhales: drunk

Lugger: two-masted sailing vessel with a lug-sail rig

Mainmast: the ship's principal mast

Matelot: (pronounced "matlow") another term for a sailor

Messdeck lawyer: a know-it-all

Midshipman: non-commissioned rank below lieutenant

Mizzen: aftermost mast in a three-masted vessel

Nipper: short length of rope used to bind anchor cable

Nipperkin: a small drink

Old coat: a veteran sailor (see "stripey")

Patarero: a muzzle-loading mortar that fires scattering shot, stones, spikes old nails, broken glass, etc.

Pinnace: small two-masted vessel; eight-oared ship's boat

Press Gang: a group of sailors who "recruit" for their ship using violence and intimidation

Quarter: 1) part of the side of the ship nearest the stern 2) mercy shown to an opponent

Reef: to shorten sail by rolling up the bottom section and securing it by tying short lines attached to the sail

Rigging: general name for ropes, chains, and wires which hold masts, spars and yards in place and control movement of the ship

Royal: to sail against topgallant

Salmagundi: a dish of chopped meat, eggs, anchovies, onions and anything else the cook can throw in; a piratical delicacy

Scuppers: holes pierced in deck near bulwarks to allow surplus water to drain off

Sheet: line running from the bottom aft corner of sail by which it can be adjusted to the wind

Shrouds: standing rigging stretched from the side of a ship to support the mast

Skysail: sail above the royal

Sloop: sailing vessel with fore and aft rigged single mast

Smacksman: sailor on a cutter or ketch-rigged sailing vessel

Snow: two-masted merchant vessel, rigged as a brig with the addition of a trysail mast

Squiffy: a buffoon

Squadron: a group of ten or less warships

Square-rigged: rig consisting of four-cornered sails hung from yards

Stanchion: upright support

Stargazer: a sail set above moonsail

Start: to hit with a rope's end or cane

Stay: standing rigging fore and aft and supporting a mast

Strike the Colors: to haul down a ship's flag as a signal of surrender

Strike: to lower or hit

Stripey: long-service able seaman (named for the many stripes on his sleeves, indicating an "old coat")

Tack: lower, forward corner of fore and aft sail; in square-rigged ships, line controlling forward lower corner of sail; ship's course in relation to the wind

Tackle: ropes and blocks

Top: platform at masthead of ship for sailors to stand upon

Topgallant: sail above topsail

Topman: sailor who works on the sails

Topmast: mast next above lower mast

Topsail: sail above mainsail

Waister: an incompetent sailor

Weather: side from which wind is blowing

Weigh: to raise

Yard: spar attached to mast to carry a sail

Yawl: four-oared ship's boat or small sailing boat

Advanced Usage

-tion

The "-tion" found at the end of words like "locomotion" and "promotion" is pronounced "-seeon". So, don't say "locomoshun", but "locomoseeon"; not "promoshun", but "promoseeon".

Missing Letters

There are a few letters you should never pronounce. The first of them is "g". Drop all your "g"s when you speak and you'll get words like "rowin", "sailin" and "fightin". Dropping all of your "v"s will get you words like "ne'er", "e'er" and "o'er".

Big, Bigger, Big Biggest!

Pirates are dramatic, and their speech is doubly so. Pirates never speak of "a big ship", they call it a "great, grand ship!" They never say never, they say "No nay ne'er!" Double up on all your adjectives and you'll be bountifully bombastic with your phrasing.

De-Conjugation

The conjugation is a rather modern invention, one that sailors always seem to be forgetting. Take the verb "to be" for example. Instead of saying "I am", sailors say, "I be". Instead of saying "You are", sailors say, "You be". Instead of saying, "They are", sailors say, "They be". Makes things a lot simpler, doesn't it?

Using Nautical Terms

Another technique for sounding more "piratey" is to use nautical terms. Just drop them into normal sentences.

References and Links

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Under the Black Flag: The Romance and the Reality of Life Among the Pirates
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